

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	Korea	REPORT	
SUBJECT	Reconstruction of P'yongyang	DATE DISTR.	25 August 1955
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SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

1. The government-managed Moranpong Theater, badly damaged during the war, was reconstructed in August 1954 by laborers and engineers from the Architects' "Trust." In October 1954, the theater was housed in a two-story building about 40 meters long, 20 meters wide, and 20 meters high.¹ The main entrance to the white-walled building was made of glass; the hall leading into the building from the porch was made of marble. The seating capacity of the theater was 1,000, including the orchestra and balcony. Orchestra seats were available to the public; balcony seats were reserved for Korean Labor Party officials and other government officials. Admission fees were 200 won for first-class seats and 150 won for second-class seats in the orchestra. No discount for military personnel was given unless they came as a group. 25X1
2. The Moranpong Theater was equipped with an electrical revolving stage; only stage shows were presented. The theater opened twice daily at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. The cloak room was staffed by four girls from 20 to 23 years old; about five other girls served as usherettes. In the basement was a dining room and several small government-operated stalls that sold a variety of items including bread, milk, cake, wine, and beer. Beer was sold in unlimited quantities at 40 won per bottle. Two or three salesmen and five or six salesgirls were employed in the stalls.
3. The Moranpong Square was considered a public stadium by P'yongyang residents because there was a 400-meter track in the center of this open area. The cement stands had a seating capacity of approximately 30,000; front seats were reserved for high-ranking officials and radio broadcasting personnel. There were three main entrances to the stadium; admission fees were 20 won per person. This square had been completed by large-scale labor mobilization of the student corps, including students of KIM Il-song University.
4. The Ministry of Culture and Propaganda building, the target of intensive bombing during the war, was completely restored. It consisted of three stories and was about 40 meters long, 12 meters wide, and 15 meters high.²
5. The government-managed First Department Store, reconstructed after the armistice, was in a five-story building.³ About 70 persons were employed in the store. The floors were arranged as follows:

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STATE	X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC		ORR	EV	X	
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a. Fifth floor - dining room.

b. Fourth floor - beauty parlor, drug store, and foreign clothing. Permanent waves cost 250 won. Soviet-made suit material cost 8,000 won per suit; [redacted] Materials used for making foreign clothes were seldom displayed. Tailoring charges were 1,700 won.

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c. Third floor - watches, radios, and books.

About 26 watches were on display, the prices of which varied from 15,000 won for Soviet-made watches [redacted]

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[redacted] Most of the available books had been published by the Soviet-Korean Culture Association through the publication division of the Korean Labor Party. Stalin's Selective Works cost 24 won per copy; KIM Il-song's Selective Works cost 200 won per copy. MAO Tse-tung's Selective Works were also on display.

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d. Second floor - shoes, white shirts, furniture, and school kits.

Leather shoes made in Russia and Czechoslovakia cost 1,000 won per pair. White shirts ranged in price from 1,100 to 1,800 won each. Wide-woof cotton material made in Communist China cost 350 won per meter; North Korean-made cotton material sold for 180 won to 220 won per meter. Notebooks cost 18 to 26 won; pencils cost 10 won each.

6. A white-walled, five-story apartment house, approximately 25 meters high, was under construction and was about half completed. When completed, it was to be a community dwelling for laborers.⁴

7. A government-operated office building for an urban bus and truck company was in a single-story wooden building. The vehicles used were of Russian and Czechoslovak make; the bus fare was 10 won.

8. The government-operated Second Department Store⁵ was in a five-story building with light green walls and a gray-tiled roof. About 50 people were employed in the store. The floors were arranged as follows:

a. Fifth floor - dining room.

b. Fourth floor - foreign clothing, beauty salon, drug store, and book store.

c. Third floor - watches, radios, white shirts, undershirts. Only a few new Hungarian-made radios were on display.

d. Second floor - materials for Korean dress, school kits, general merchandise, and toilet articles.

e. First floor - edible items, shoes, kitchenware, cigarettes, and wine.

Commodity prices were about the same as those of the First Department Store.

9. In the Sinyang Market, more commonly known as the "Central Market," were many government-operated stores and an unknown number of privately-managed stores. Also in the market was a collection center that was an agency of the Commercial Control Division of the Department of Commerce. This collection center bought

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merchandise from merchants who were unable to pay their taxes, in order to enable them to meet their tax payments. Commodity prices in the market were as follows:

ITEM	AMOUNT	UNIT	
White rubber shoes	1,200 to 15,000 won	pair	
Sneakers (made in Communist China)	500 to 600 won	pair	
Undershirts, winter (made in Communist China)	3,500 won	each	
Wrist watches	20,000 won	each	25X1
Material for one suit	20,000 won		25X1
Material for one suit (made in USSR)	8,000 to 15,000 won		
Material for one suit (made in Communist China)	15,000 to 20,000 won		

Private food stores sold vegetables, pork, beef, and some seafoods; rice was not offered for sale.

10. The Taedong River bridge had been reconstructed after the armistice.⁶ There appeared to be no major differences in style, size, and length, as compared to the prewar bridge. North of this bridge was a clearly-visible wooden bridge; south was a single-track railroad bridge.⁷
11. Stalin Avenue extended from YD3720 to YD3923, and was approximately 3,800 meters long. Several other roads had been widened and an asphalt road was under construction.

Comments

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1. Discrepancies in the dimensions of the theater have been noted. [] it was a three-story building; the size was 30 x 10 x 6 and 80 x 40 x 20 meters respectively. The underground theater has been located variously as under the present theater and directly behind it. 25X1
2. [] the building was six stories high. [] it was a four-story building with dimensions of 50 x 50 x 20 meters. 25X1
3. [] additional information on this department store.
4. [] this building would be a community dwelling for laborers and their families and that the first floor would contain 25X1

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a grocery store, general store, and public bathrooms.

5. [REDACTED]

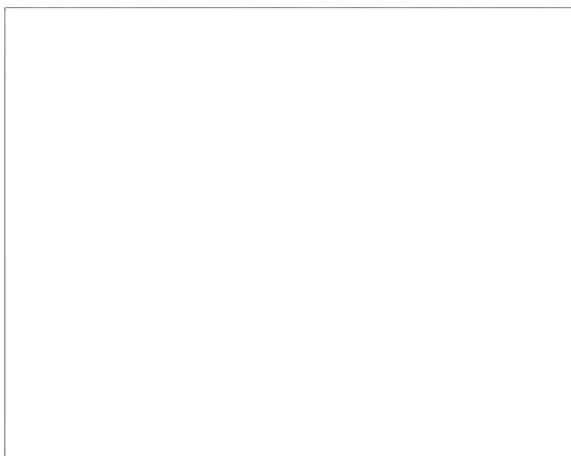
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6. [REDACTED] Comment. The North Korean radio stated that this bridge was reconstructed by engineers of the Communist Chinese Forces [REDACTED]

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7. [REDACTED] Comment. Another government agency reported that this railroad bridge was completed [REDACTED] by CCF personnel. It was reported to be a continuous, simply-supported quadrangular, through-truss-type bridge. The section directly over the island had arched spans.

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